

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER III. A COUSIN.

THE carriage bearing Veronica rolled along smoothly down a long avenue. It was the road leading from an erst grand-ducal villa which stands on the top of an eminence—scarcely high enough to be termed a hill, in a country of Alps and Appenines, but which is of very respectable altitude nevertheless, and is called the Poggio Imperiale. The avenue is flanked by cypress and ilex-trees, of ancient growth.

Veronica had heard her mother speak so much, and so often, of Florence that she thought she knew it. But coming to view city and suburb with her bodily eyes, she found everything strange, foreign, and, on the score of beauty, disappointing. Later, she understood the amazing picturesqueness of that storied town, and, with every glance its attractions grew on her. But there are some places—as there is some music, and that among the noblest—which do not take at once the senses by storm, but need time and familiarity to develop their wealth of beauty and resource.

What Veronica saw with her unaccustomed eyes, was, first, the long, dusty, squalid Roman road, into which the carriage turned at the foot of the avenue: then the Porta Romana, with its huge, yawning archway, through which carts of all kinds were struggling; those coming in having to stop to be examined by the officers of the town custom dues, and those going out pushing boldly through the gate and grazing wheels against the stationary vehicles.

Everybody was talking very loudly. The

few who really could by no exercise of ingenuity find any more articulate words to say, solaced themselves by half-uttered oaths and long-drawn lugubrious howls addressed to the patient, lean beasts that drew the carts.

In odd contrast with this nimble energy of tongue, were the slow and languid movements of all concerned. The octroi men lounged against the walls on high four-legged stools set out before a queer little office, very dim and dirty, with glazed windows. They had within reach long iron rods, with which they probed trusses of hay or straw, or which they thrust in among bundles of linen, or piles of straw-coloured flasks, or poked down amidst the legs of people sitting in country chaises, or under the box-seat of hackney coachmen. And when they had thus satisfied themselves that there was no attempt being made to defraud the municipality of Florence of the tax on food and wine, and whatsoever other articles are subject to duty, they—always with ineffable languor—put their hands into their pockets again and bade the driver proceed. One man especially, with melancholy dark eyes and a sallow face, uttered the permission to pass on, "Avanti!" in a tone of such profound and hopeless dejection, that one might have fancied him a guardian of that awful portal his great townsman wrote of, rather than a mortal custom-house officer at the city gate, and that he was warning the doomed victims: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here!"

Sir John Gale's carriage only paused for an instant in passing through the Porta Romana. The spirited horses chafed at the momentary check, and dashed on again rapidly over the resounding pavement.

A succession of objects seemed to flit

past Veronica's eyes like the swift changes in a dream.

There was a long street paved with flat stones, fitted into each other angle for angle and point for point, like the pieces in a child's puzzle. There was in this street no side pavement for foot passengers, and—the street being very full—the coachman kept uttering a warning cry at intervals, like a minnie-gun. Indeed, as they approached the busier parts of the town, their pace was slackened perforce. No vehicle short of the car of Juggernaut could have ruthlessly kept up a steady progress through such a crowd.

There were houses of various styles and dimensions on either side of the long street, nearly all plastered; one or two, however, with a heavy cut stone front to the basement story. Every window had the inevitable green jalousies, and nearly every window had a group of heads framed in it, for it was a summer evening, and there were people taking the air—they called it *pigliare il fresco*, albeit it was yet hot enough, and stifling in the narrow ways of the city; and there were bright bonnets to be criticised, and acquaintances to be recognised, and familiar conversations touching the privatest family affairs to be held in brassy voices, between ladies and gentlemen standing in the street, and other ladies and gentlemen leaning on their elbows out of third-floor windows. And the talkers in the street planted themselves in any spot that came convenient, and remained there immovable, as regardless of the pressing throng of passers-by, as a stubborn broad-based stone in a stream is regardless of the rushing current. And the passers-by yielded as the water yields, and skirted round these obstructive groups, or—if the subject of their discourse struck them as peculiarly interesting—lingered awhile to listen to their talk with a grave placidity, which might be characterised as good-humoured, only that that word suggests somewhat of merriment to an English ear, and these people wore few smiles on their brown faces.

Then came a vision of an open space with houses on the left hand, and on the right a steep incline covered with gravel, on the summit of which stood a vast palace (its façade seeming at the first glance somewhat low for its width), flanked by open arcades that advanced from the main body of the building and embraced two sides of the gravelled space. These arcades were based on titanic blocks of rough stone,

and under the shade of the arches a military band was making lively music, and a dense mass of citizens with their wives and families was listening to it, still with the same non-chalant placidity.

Onward through a very narrow street of gloomy, frowning, iron-barred stone palaces; across a quaint bridge with shops and houses on it, where the gems and gold in the jewellers' windows flashed brightly beneath the beetle-browed penthouse shutters; past an open arch making a gap in the line of buildings on the bridge, through which was seen a glimpse of gold and purple hills swimming in a haze of evening sunshine; along a stone quay with tall handsome houses on one hand, and on the other a deep wide trench more than half full of brownish sand, and with pools of water here and there, and a shrunk middle stream sluggishly crawling towards the sea, which stream was the classic Arno, nothing less!—past the end of another bridge wide and handsome, at whose foot a dense crowd was assembled in a small piazzetta: some standing, some sitting on stone benches, some perched on the parapet overhanging the river, all watching the passers-by on foot or in vehicles; down another street which widened out into a considerable space, and then contracted again, and where a tall column stood, and hackney coaches were ranged hard by, and a vast old mediæval palace—more like a fortress than a palace—heaved its bulk above the narrow ways behind and about it, like a giant raising his head and shoulders out of a pressing throng to breathe; and where a few elegantly dressed gentlemen (rather attenuated about the legs, and unwholesome about the skin, and with a general vague air pervading them—though some were handsome dark-eyed youngsters, too—of having not quite enough to eat, and considerably too much to smoke) were lounging at the door of a club-house, utterly unlike any club-house known to dwellers beyond the Straits of Dover, or perhaps nearer than that: and at last the carriage drew up suddenly with a mighty clatter at the door of a smart shop, all French mirrors and gilding, where fans were displayed for sale, and Paul descended nimbly but decorously from the box to hand "miladi" out.

All the sights that she had seen in her rapid drive, were vividly impressed on Veronica's eyes, but she had not had time to give herself an account of them: to digest them, as it were, in her brain. She felt al-

most giddy as she alighted, and entered the shop. But one circumstance had not escaped either her observation or her comprehension: the fact, namely, that her beauty and elegance had attracted much attention from the loungers at the club door. One man especially had gazed at her, like one enchanted, as her carriage whirled past.

She was looking at a bright glittering heap of fans on the counter, turning them over with a disdainful air, and pushing them away one by one with the tips of her gloves, when she became aware of a face looking furtively in through the spacious pane of the shop window. The face disappeared, and its owner walked away. Presently he repassed, glanced in again (when he did so, Veronica's quick eye recognised him as the man who had stared at her so admiringly in the street), and finally stopped and addressed Paul, who was standing in sentinel fashion at the shop door.

To Veronica's surprise, Paul answered him at once, touching his hat respectfully. She hastily chose a couple of fans, bade her maid pay for them and bring them to the carriage, and went to the door, where Paul was still so busily conversing with the stranger that he was not aware of her approach until she spoke to him.

At the sound of her voice he turned hastily and the stranger took off his hat and bowed profoundly.

He was a well-looking, slender man, of about thirty. He had fine teeth, and bright dark eyes, which latter, however, seemed to elude yours like a picture badly hung, on which you cannot get a good light, shift and strive as you will. It was not that he turned his glance aside either, for he seemed to look boldly enough at whoever addressed him, but the glittering eye could not be fathomed. He was prematurely bald about the forehead, but the back and sides of his head were sufficiently well covered with dark waving locks, and he wore a short beard and moustaches of glossy black. His dress was of the latest fashion, and, although perhaps slightly brighter in colour than an insular eye would deem fitting for masculine attire, was well chosen and perfectly made. He wore a glass in his eye, attached to a short black ribbon. And when he bowed, the glass fell and dangled across his waistcoat.

"A thousand pardons, madame," he said, speaking in French but with a strong Italian accent: "I formerly had the honour of knowing Monsieur le Baron Gale, and just recognised his servant."

Veronica bowed, with an easy hauteur, which yet was not calculated to repulse the speaker. So at least he thought, for he ventured to press forward and offer the support of his arm to assist Veronica into her carriage. She touched it with the tips of her fingers as she got in. Paul stood holding the door open with a grave face.

"I was charmed to find that my good friend Gale had returned to Italy," said the gentleman, still standing bareheaded by the side of the carriage after Veronica was seated. "And," he added, "under such delightful circumstances. Paul tells me that he is in the Villa Chiari. I shall do myself the honour—if I may hope for your amiable permission—of paying my respects to my good Gale, my homage to madame."

Veronica bowed, smiled very slightly, murmured some inarticulate word, and gave the signal to drive on, leaving the stranger, hat in hand, on the pavement. When she had driven some distance, she asked Paul in English who that person was?

He was the Signor Cesare Barletti, dei Principi Barletti; not the head of the house; a younger brother. The Barletti were a Neapolitan family. The Prince Cesare had known Sir John at Naples; Oh yes; that was quite true. And Sir John had liked him to come and play picquet or écarté with him when he was laid up at his hotel, and could not go out. He (Paul) certainly thought that Sir John would like the prince to call and see him; otherwise Paul would have taken good care not to mention Sir John's present address. The Principe Cesare de' Barletti, was not a Florentine; miladi understood—did she not?—that it was the renewal of old Florentine "relations" which Sir John objected to at present.

"Miladi" leaned back with an assumption of indifference and inattention while Paul spoke. But no syllable of what he said was lost upon her.

Barletti! Cesare de' Barletti! This man, then, was a cousin of her own! Her mother's father had been dei Principi, of the Princes Barletti.

Sir John knew and cared nothing about Veronica's mother. He in all probability had never heard Mrs. Levincourt's maiden name. But Veronica knew it well, and had nourished a secret pride in her Neapolitan ancestry.

That the man who had accosted her was her cousin, did not much matter. But his intention of paying a visit to Villa Chiari mattered a great deal. It offered

a hope of change and society. She had been a little surprised that Paul should have given him the address. But Paul had himself explained that. It was old Florentine acquaintances whom Sir John wished to shun. This man being a stranger in Tuscany might have the entrée to Villa Chiari. Doubtless Paul knew what he was about. If Sir John knew that Barletti was Veronica's cousin would it make any difference in his reception of him? She mused upon the question until she reached the villa. It was quite evening. The sun had set behind the hills; but there was still a brightness in the sky. "Miladi" hastened to her own room to dress for dinner. She made a gorgeous toilet every day; finding a great deal of real pleasure in her fine clothes. The suspicion that this was a pleasure which some other person in her presence genuinely disdained, would have much embittered her delight in the rich silks and gay jewels and fine lace. But such a mortification never befel her in Sir John Gale's company.

At dinner they talked of Cesare de' Barletti.

"Paul has told you, of course," said Veronica, "about the man who spoke to him, and afterwards to me?"

"Oh yes—Barletti. Ah—yes: I knew him at Naples. Wonder what brings him here!"

"He said he would call."

"Not a doubt of it! He likes a good dinner and good wine; and he never gets either at his own expense."

"I should suppose that the Principe de' Barletti does not need to come to his acquaintances for food!" said Veronica.

Sir John burst into a grating laugh. "Bah!" he cried, "you are impayable with your Principe de' Barletti! The real prince and head of the family is poor enough. He lives nine months of every year in the third floor of a mangy palazzo at Torre del Greco, in order to scrape together enough to spend the other three months in Paris. But this fellow is only *dei principi*—a younger son of a younger son. He has twopence a year, which he spends on shiny boots (I dare say he blacks them himself) and cheap gloves. But he plays a good game of picquet; and I found it worth while to let him come nearly every evening when I was once laid by the heels—or the toe, rather, for I got a confounded fit of the gout—in a beastly hotel at Naples. Of course he was very glad. It paid him capitally!"

Veronica's temper was chafed by this slighting mention of a Barletti. It vexed her. She knew that Sir John's coarse insolence was directed against this man in utter ignorance of the fact that he was in any degree connected with herself. Still it vexed her. But she had no intention of incurring the risk of ridicule for the sake of championing her newly-found relation. She had been considerably elated by the thought of being cousin to a prince: and proportionally depressed by the discovery that to be *dei Principi* Barletti was no guarantee of important position.

"Then you mean this man to come here?" asked Veronica.

"Mean him to come? Yes; if he makes himself amusing. If not, I shall give him his congé."

"If you feel that you want amusement why do you not go into Florence sometimes?"

"La bella idea! Go to Florence for amusement in June! There's nobody there; and if there were, it's much too hot to do anything. Besides—no, no; we must get through the summer here as best we can. The dry heat suits me rather: especially on this hill where one gets plenty of air, even if it be hot air. In the autumn and winter we will move south. Meanwhile if Barletti drops in our way, so be it."

"Nobody in Florence?" replied Veronica, whose mind had been dwelling on those words. "It seemed to me that there were a great many carriages—"

"You did not go to the Cascine?" interrupted Sir John, quickly.

"No: I was too late. But I saw the people driving along the Lung' Arno."

She perfectly understood from Sir John's manner that he had given orders to Paul not to take her to the Cascine, and that he had felt a momentary suspicion that his orders had been disobeyed. The question presented itself to her mind, what would have been the result if Paul had yielded to her desire? But when she retired to her own apartment—which she did early—she lay awake for some time, occupying herself exclusively with another and very different problem: namely, which of her dresses she should put on to-morrow evening when Cesare de' Barletti might be expected to make his appearance at Villa Chiari.

CHAPTER IV. IN THE GARDEN.

"I WAS so delightfully astonished!"

"At seeing Paul? He does not usually produce ecstasy in the beholder. But

'tutti i gusti son gusti,' all tastes are tastes, as they say here."

"Pardon! no: not at the sight of Paul for Paul's sake, but——"

"But for mine?"

"For yours, caro mio. I had never heard that you were married; never."

"I wonder if he had," thought Sir John.

"He says it so emphatically, that it is probably a lie."

"And the sight of miladi positively dazzled me! What eyes! What a grace! How beautiful!"

"Take another cup of coffee," said Sir John, dryly, interrupting the raptures of his companion. And yet the raptures did not altogether displease him.

Sir John Gale and the Principe Cesare de' Barletti were sitting together beneath the loggia on the western side of the Villa Chiari. The setting sun was flushing all the sky before them. They looked out on the garden, where, among the laurels and acacias, a white figure passed and repassed slowly.

The cracked scagliola pavement of the loggia was covered, where the two men sat, by a thick carpet. Footstools and cushions were there too, in abundance. Between Sir John and his guest stood a little marble-topped table, bearing coffee and wine. Sir John was half reclining in an easy chair, with his legs stretched out before him supported by cushions. Barletti sat in a rocking-chair, on which he swung slowly backwards and forwards. Both men were smoking.

"The coffee is not bad, eh?" said Sir John.

"It is very strong."

"Better than the stuff they give you at your caffè, isn't it?"

"Ma, si! Better no doubt. But very strong. I should like a little cold water, if I may have it."

Sir John rang a bell that stood on the table.

Before a servant could answer the summons, Veronica approached. She had been strolling up and down the garden, and had just reached the spot in front of the loggia, when the bell sounded.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"The Principe would like some cold water. He finds the coffee stronger than he is accustomed to."

There was an indefinable sneer in the tone in which Sir John pronounced these words. The words were innocent enough. But Veronica understood the tone, and it offended her.

"I dare say he does," she retorted. "It is made to suit our English taste, which likes strong flavours—some people would say, coarse flavours."

"Oh no!" protested Barletti, not having in the least understood either the sneer or the retort; "the flavour is very good indeed."

"There is some deliciously cold water always in the marble basin of the broken fountain yonder," said Veronica, impulsively. "Let us go and get some! It will be better than any the servants will bring."

The words were addressed to Cesare de' Barletti, who threw away his cigarette—with secret reluctance, by the way—and rose to follow 'miladi.'

She had taken up a goblet from the table and was running towards the fountain.

She had resolved to impress this stranger—already appreciative enough of her beauty—with her dignity, hauteur, and airs de grande dame. And on a sudden behold her skipping through the garden like a school-girl!

The first plan was too slow, and required too much phlegm and patience to carry out. Barletti took her queenly mood very much as a matter of course. She could not bear to be ten minutes in the society of a stranger without producing an *effect*. And moreover she required to see an immediate result. She was vain and arrogant, but not proud, and not stupid; so that she could neither disregard the opinion of the most contemptible persons, nor delude herself in the teeth of evidence with the dull, comfortable faith that she was being admired, when she was not. And then came the irresistible craving to make a coup—to shine—to dazzle.

Sir John looked after her in surprised vexation. He remembered her having done similar things for *his* behoof; that had been very natural and laudable. But for a beggarly Neapolitan principino! Sir John felt himself defrauded. Had a pet animal approached him at the moment, he would certainly have kicked it. As it was, all he could do to relieve his feelings was to swear at the frightened servant who answered the bell, for not coming sooner.

Cesare de' Barletti wondered much within himself that any human being should move more, or more quickly, than was absolutely necessary, on a hot June evening. He at first attributed Veronica's unexpected proceeding to that inexhaus-

tible and incomprehensible cause, British eccentricity.

But when he rejoined her at the edge of the broken fountain, another solution presented itself to his mind. She had perhaps seized this opportunity of speaking to him out of sight and hearing of her husband. Why not? It was impossible that she could care a straw for that elderly roud. Very natural to have married him; he was so rich. Very natural also to admire the Principe Cesare de' Barletti, who was not eligible as a husband—as he very well knew, and very candidly acknowledged—but who was decidedly well-looking and well-born, and would make a very jewel of cavalieri serventi! There was but one circumstance which caused Cesare to hesitate before accepting this solution as final. Veronica was an Englishwoman! And really there was no judging Englishwomen by the rules that hold good in estimating the motives of the rest of the sex! And who-soever should suppose that this reflection implied in the Italian's mind any special respect or admiration for Englishwomen, would have been very much mistaken.

Veronica filled the goblet at the fountain. The filling was a slow process, inasmuch as the water dripped sparsely through the crevice before mentioned. Whilst the drops of bright water were falling one by one into the glass, Veronica kept her eyes fixed on the latter, and her attention was apparently absorbed in watching it.

"I pray you not to give yourself the trouble to do that for me, signora," said Barletti, bending forward, and offering to take the goblet.

She waved him back with her hand, and said, "I am watching to see how long it takes to fill the glass. The drops fall so regularly. Drip, drip, drip!"

He stood and looked at her. Now, at all events, he was not taking her behaviour as a matter of course.

As soon as the water touched the brim of the glass, she relinquished it into Barletti's hands and walked away slowly, as though she had lost all interest in his further proceedings. The prince drank a long draught. He had no idea of not enjoying its delicious coolness because he was puzzled by "miladi." When he had done, he walked after her, and overtook her.

"That was very fresh and pleasant," he said. "A thousand thanks."

"Eh?"

"The water was so good. A thousand—"

"Oh!"

"Decidedly," thought Barletti, glancing at the beautiful face beside him, "she is English, thoroughly English! Who is to make out such people?"

They found, on returning to the house, that Sir John had gone in. He was in the little salon, the servants said. Would il Signor Principe join him there?

Il Signor Principe complied with the request.

Veronica lingered in the loggia and looked out over the landscape. The sun had gone down. The brief twilight was nearly over. The trees stood out dark against the background of pure sky, pale green near the horizon, and deepening towards the zenith to an intense dark blue. Not a leaf stirred in the breathless calm. There was no moon, but the heavens seemed to grow full of stars as the daylight faded. They quivered and shook with a liquid silvery lustre. And below on the earth sparkled and danced to and fro a thousand golden gleaming specks, threading a mazy pattern just above the crests of the ripening wheat. They were fire-flies. When one of the bright insects chanced to come near Veronica, she saw him glow and pale with a palpitating intermittent flame. And sometimes the whole field full of them appeared to shine and fade simultaneously, like the successive showers of sparks from a smithy fire that respond to the deep breath of the labouring bellows.

It was all as different as possible from Daneshire. And yet Veronica began to think of a certain summer night in Shipley long ago, when she and Maud were children together, and her mother had sat by an open window telling them stories of her Italian life. She remembered the black old yew-tree, only a little blacker than the cloudy, sultry, starless sky. She remembered the sound of her mother's voice, and Maud's dimly-seen little white face, and the touch of Maud's soft, warm, little hand, stroking her (Veronica's) hair in a sort of rhythmic accompaniment to Mrs. Levin-court's narrative. She did not think she had been very happy in those days. She pitied herself as she recalled some of them. Nevertheless their remembrance caused a vague yearning in her heart, and filled her eyes with tears. A conviction, which she tried to ignore, was in her mind. She did not fight against it by self-deluding arguments; she simply tried to avoid acknowledging its existence, as we turn away our eyes from a disagreeable object that we know to be lying in wait for us on a path whereby

we must pass. But it was there; she knew it was there. And this conviction was, that she had given all and gained nothing—that she had been duped and defrauded.

She did not believe that what she aimed at would, if obtained, have turned to dust and ashes. And she knew she had not got what she aimed at. The horrible sense of the *irrevocableness* of the past came over her. The tears brimmed over and ran down her cheeks, and they brought no solace. They only humiliated, and made her angry.

A maid, going into one of the upper rooms to close the shutters for the night, looked out and saw "miladi," leaning, with folded arms, against a column at the end of the loggia, and apparently absorbed in watching the fire-flies.

It was an odd idea to stand there alone, when she might chat, and lounge on a sofa, and drink iced lemonade in the salon! But gentlefolks were odd: especially foreign gentlefolks. And Beppina went down to the servants' quarters, not ill contented with her own lot, and prepared to discuss her master and mistress, and to thank her stars—with a side glance at Ansano, the footman—that she was not tied to that "vecchio brontolone," that grumbling old fellow, as she irreverently styled Sir John Gale.

Meanwhile Veronica, who never yielded herself, long, to any painful mental impression, returned to the house, and entered the saloon where Sir John and the prince were engaged over their game at piquet.

The room was brilliantly lighted, and dazzled her, coming from without. She felt more angry with her tears than ever, on becoming suddenly aware, as she entered the saloon, that her eyelids were swollen, and her eyes weak, and that they must be red and ugly.

"Oh," she cried, stopping short, and clasping her hands before her face, "What a glare! It blinds me!"

Sir John was too intent on his game to regard her. Cesare de' Barletti looked up, and fell instantly into a trance of admiration—for a costly diamond that glittered on Veronica's slender finger. He played a wrong card (as he afterwards confessed, an *imbecile* card!) and was vanquished.

Sir John was pleased. So was Veronica. The former attributed the victory to his own skill, on which—as he played very ill—he valued himself. The latter had no doubt that her presence had agitated de' Barletti into forgetting his game. Barletti himself was well satisfied to have put

his host into good humour. The stakes, for which they played, were very trifling, and he thought the small sum he had lost not ill invested.

"Will you have your revenge, prince?" asked Sir John, throwing himself back in his chair with a complacent smile.

Barletti shook his head doubtfully.

"Aha! You show the white feather? Positively I did not think I should be able to tell one card from another. It is so long since I have played. You ought to have beaten me, you really ought. Ha, ha, ha!"

Veronica seated herself on a couch near the window. Her white dress was soft and flowing, and her black hair shone in its rich ripples as she leaned her head against the dark velvet couch. Diamonds glittered on her neck and arms and hands: and trembled in her ears. There was no speck of colour about her dress, and its pure whiteness enhanced the rich glow of her brunette complexion. She still shaded her eyes with one hand, complaining of the light.

Sir John, having finished his game, was full of solicitude for her. Should he have the candles removed to another part of the room? Would she like a screen? Had she caught cold, or what was it? Her eyes were usually so strong! Being now the central object of attraction, her spirits rose buoyantly. She coquetted and commanded, and made Sir John move and remove the wax tapers a dozen times before their position was satisfactory to her. At last he got tired, and rang for Paul to carry them away and bring a shaded lamp instead. Barletti looked on admiringly, and when, on the lamp being carried in, there appeared in its wake a tray with galantine, and chicken, and wine, and sweets (these English are such eaters!) his spirits rose too, and they were all three quite brilliant over the little impromptu supper. The conversation was carried on in French, Sir John not being able to speak Italian fluently. But suddenly Veronica addressed Barletti in Italian, and intensely enjoyed his admiring surprise at the purity of her accent.

"How admirably miladi speaks Italian!" he exclaimed, with enthusiasm.

"My mother was an Italian," said Veronica.

"Was she?" asked Sir John, carelessly. "Tiens! I never knew that. Or—stay—oh yes to be sure! I think I remember hearing it mentioned."

"How distract you are to-night!" said Veronica, with an assumption of tolerant good humour.

Cesare Barletti took away in his brain three themes on which his thoughts, passions, and prejudices, made endless variations, as he drove down the Avenue of the Poggio Imperiale. The first was:—It is odd that a man should not know or remember who his wife's mother was! The second was:—*miladi* wanted to make it appear that Gale was speaking in preoccupation or absence of mind; now Gale is never "distract," it is not in his character. The third was:—That handsome creature is not an Englishwoman, *puro sangue*! The fact of her having had an Italian mother brings her more into the category of human beings whose manners and development I understand. I wonder whether she was offended with me because I did not fall at her feet when we were in the garden together, or, at least, make some preparations for a future prostration of myself at her shrine!

On this last theme the variations were brilliant and inexhaustible.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE NORTH. LEEDS TO YORK.

FROM the baldest and highest point of Mickle Fell, the crown of Yorkshire, the crow surveys the great county, half as large as Holland, which he is about to traverse on his swift way to his final roosting place on the tower of Berwick-upon-Tweed. The bird sees beneath him, small as toy houses, those great monastic ruins of Rievaulx, Fountains, Kirkstall, Bolton, and Jorevaux; while the castles of Knaresborough and Pontefract, Skipton and York, Richmond and Scarborough, wake up the old bird's memory of the days of the Cliffords and Mowbrays, the Lacys and the Scropes, names that still make the heart of a true Yorkshireman beat with a warmer and a fuller pulse. The eastern cliff-ramparts washed by the German Ocean, the bracing moors and fells, the green and laughing vales, the great manufacturing cities, smoking like witches' caldrons, and larded with spikes of factory chimneys, lie before the crow, and threaten to tempt him from the even tenor of his flight over those fair rivers, the Humber, the Wharfe, the Nid, and the Derwent, that stretch far beneath his airy road their silver clues to the labyrinth he has to traverse.

First descending through clouds of smoke

and steam, he alights on the black shore of the Aire. He is in Leeds, paradise of clothiers, murky Eden of woollen manufacturers. The street and market talk is of swansdowns and kerseymeres, and of shoddy also. Half the wool of the West Riding passes through the many thousand busy and sinewy Yorkshire hands that force wool into new and higher forms in the good town of Leeds.

During the civil wars, when the Scropes and the Fairfaxes were shouting their rival battle cries, Leeds was nearly always Parliamentary. There had not been much fighting on the banks of the Aire since, in 655, Penda, the hoary Pagan tyrant, who in his time had slain three East Anglian and two Northumbrian kings (such as they were), at last fell in a great rout of his Mercians on the shores of the overflowing Aire, twenty of his vassal chieftains perishing with him on the field or in the flood. After many centuries the war fever seethed up hotly once more in the veins of the staunch men of the West Riding. In January, 1643, Sir Thomas Fairfax, of Denton, marched on the clothiers' town, with six troops of horse, three companies of dragoons, one thousand musketeers, and two thousand club men from Bradford. Sir William Saville, the Royalist commandant, returning a haughty answer to the summons to surrender, Sir Thomas drove straight at the town with colours flying, beating the garrison from their outworks and killing their cannoniers. The storm lasted two hours, at the end of which time Fairfax, followed by Sir Henry Fowles and Captain Forbes, hewed his way into the town, taking five hundred Cavalier prisoners and two brass cannons, with good store of ammunition. Sir William Saville fled, and got safely across the Aire, but his sergeant-major, Beaumont, was drowned in trying to follow his leader. The Puritans only lost twenty or thirty men in the short but hot assault.

Briggate and Kirkgate both remained tolerably quiet till 1647, when the Scotch army having generously surrendered King Charles, the rueful king passed through Leeds a prisoner. It was on that occasion, when Charles was lodged at Red Hall, that John Harrison, the great Leeds merchant, nobly came

True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shone upon,

and coaxing and forcing his way through the sullen and morose musketeers, knelt, and with bowed head, presented his majesty

with what he smilingly called, "a tankard of right home-brewed excellent ale." The guards sympathising with the gift, and seeing its apparent harmlessness, withdrew, but when the king lifted the lid of the great silver flagon, lo! and behold, it was brimming with yellow gold pieces, which the royal gentleman in trouble, with his usual craft, took care to instantly stow away in his big pockets, dismissing the kindly giver with a gracious smile. The husband of a female servant, who offered to help the king that night to escape, was, after the Restoration, appointed, by a not too grateful monarch, the king's chief bailiff in Yorkshire; and growing rich, he built for his disport Crosby House, in Upperhead Row. Thoresby has another version of this story. He says, Charles at the time was in the land of the Scots, and on his way from Newark to Newcastle, and so far the worthy old gentleman errs exceedingly. While the king was at Red Hall, a zealous maid-servant of Alderman Metcalf's entreated the king to change clothes with her and so escape: she promised, if he did, to lead him in the dark out of the garden door into a back alley, called Land's Lane, and thence to a friend's house, who would forward him safely to France. The obstinate king, however, declined the offer of the generous woman with thanks, and gave her a token (the legend says the Garter, which is unlikely), saying that if it were never in his own power, on sight of that token his son would hereafter reward her.

Before the crow dismisses good Mr. Thoresby, let the bird cull one or two choice notes of that worthy's Leeds memorabilia, and first, a note on Leeds strength (1658—1725). Thoresby mentions Ralph Dimsdale, a cloth-worker, who, vexed at a carrier complaining that a certain pack of cloth would break his horse's back, lifted up the bale and carried it easily as a Hercules, from Alderman Ibbotson's house to the churchyard. He also records the strength of Mr. Thomas Smallwood, a chaplain in the Parliamentary army, who, to outbrave the soldiers, would sometimes lift at arm's length three pikes (fourteen feet long each) tied together. A note of memory, too: one Miss Dorothy Dixon, of Hunslet Lane, when a child, was able to remember nearly a whole sermon, "letter perfect," as actors say. Of swiftness: Edmund Preston, the Leeds butcher, could run twice round Chapeltown Moor (a four-mile course) in fourteen minutes. It was roughly calculated that three

thousand pounds had been won by this man's heels. This Hare-foot died in 1700, of a wound received from a stake as he was skipping over a hedge after some stray sheep. Of strange sympathies: a note of one Mr. Thomas Sharp, who died at Leeds in 1693. At the very hour of his dissolution a distant friend and townsman of his fell into a bitter agony of tears and vehement passion of apprehension, so that he could not continue dressing himself, but stood naked till he could send a messenger to inquire for the sick man. Impatient of the messenger's return, the master hastened after him, and found Mr. Sharp just dead, and the shroud not yet wrapped round him. A note of longevity: one Mr. Thomas Bernard, of Leeds, fifty years old when he married, had eighteen children, rode briskly to hunting when he was above a hundred, and could then read without spectacles.

But we may have too much even of old Thoresby, so the crow, launching from the top of the domed tower of the Town Hall, which only wants "just a something" to rival the great Hôtels de Ville of Flanders, pushes on over moor and valley for the city of York, stately crowned by its triple tiara of minster towers, above the Ouse, and nearly midway between London and Edinburgh; and from that tower the crow looks down greetingly on Severus's Hills and many a fertile square of pasture. The warlike Scots, with then a strong tendency southward, besieged this city, aided by the Britons, in the reign of Severus (207); they were under a Scythian leader. (Heaven only knows how a Russian or Tartar general ever got promoted to such a post in those days.) The Emperor Severus, though old and gouty, drove the Scotch wasps off with his cohorts, who then marched into the Lowlands, cutting down forests, making roads, and draining marshes as they moved. The march, however, is said to have cost him fifty thousand men, for the Scotch even then never gave any one more than two shillings for half-a-crown, and were grim, shoulder to shoulder, canny, hard to beat kind of bodies. Severus then turned the eighty miles of earth rampart that the Emperor Hadrian had made (he also had lived at York) into stone, from the Solway Firth to Wallsend, where coals were then scarcely sufficiently appreciated. On a second revolt of the Scots, the old emperor, like Edward the First, vowed their entire extermination, but death stopped his march at the

very threshold of the Palace of Eboracum (York). Feeling his blood chilling at the source, and worn by long Syrian and Caledonian campaigns, he called to his bedside his two evil sons, Geta the dog, and Caracalla the wolf. "I leave you, my sons," he said, "a firm government. I found the republic torn and disturbed; cherish the legions." Then to his attendants, the Cæsar said: "I have been all, and yet am no better for it now." It was Solomon's bitter sigh of "vanity of vanities" over again. He next asked for the golden urn in which his ashes were to be conveyed to Rome, and earnestly looking at it, said, "Thou shalt soon hold what the whole world could scarcely contain." Soon after he calmly departed, meeting King Death as a king should meet a king. The body of this Roman emperor was burnt on a great pile of wood on one of those three hills near Holdgate, on which the crow has already fixed his keen eye. After this old man's death there was hideous work at the city on the Ouse, for discord sowed envy and hatred in the hearts of the brothers, and Caracalla, the stronger and more evil spirit of the two, fearing Geta with the army, first massacred twenty thousand of his adherents in the ranks, then led by the devil from bad to worse, ended by stabbing Geta in his mother's arms.

Now the crow, taking a bold flight over centuries, alights on a later scene of tragic horror, which Shakespeare has painted in Rembrandt's finest manner. Those blood-thirsty Wars of the Roses culminated in that terrible day of retaliation at York in 1460. The pretender to the crown unwisely allowed himself, in all the reckless arrogance of his nature, to be shut up in his castle of Sendal with only six thousand men at arms, while the Duke of Somerset, a king's man, beleaguered him with eighteen thousand. York's faithful old counsellor, Sir David Hale, entreated his master not to venture forth into the open till joined by his son (afterwards Edward the Fourth) with reinforcements, but Queen Margaret's insults and sneers, that it was disgraceful to a man who aspired to a crown to be shut up in a castle, and by a woman, too, were not to be borne by a proud, self-willed general.

"Hast thou loved me so long," he said, "and wouldst thou have me now dishonoured? Thou never sawest me keep fortress when I was regent in Normandy. No; like a man I always issued forth and fought mine enemies, ever to their

loss and my own honour. I will fight them now, Davy, though I fight them alone."

The Duke of York then marched out, and drew up his small army on Wakefield Green. The Duke of Somerset came to meet him in three divisions, himself in the centre, Lord Clifford on the left, and the Earl of Worcester on the right. The Duke of York began by a bull-like rush straight at the heart of his enemies, but they outflanked him, and slowly lapped him in with a flood of swords, lances, and axes. The fight was hand to hand—the hatred embittered by past mutual cruelties. A priest, the tutor to Rutland, York's second son, escaped from the mêlée, and hurried with his charge into Wakefield, but cruel Clifford, observing the lad's rich dress, spurred after him, and, on the bridge, overtook him and the priest.

"Save him!" cried the good monk, "he is the son of a prince, and may do you good hereafter."

"Son of York!" shouted the savage Lancastrian, whose own child had been slain at the battle of St. Albans: and seizing the boy by the hair, he said, "thy father slew mine child, and so will I thee and all thy kin," and stabbed him to the heart. The Duke of York, too, was dragged to a mound and placed on it in mockery as on a throne. The soldiers twisted a crown of grass, and paying him derisive homage, shouted,

"Hail, king without a kingdom! Hail, prince without a people!"

Then they forced him on his knees and struck off his head. This gory and hideous trophy Clifford stuck on a lance, and with his own hands presented to the she-wolf Margaret, saying, with a bitter laugh,

"Madame, your war is done, here is the ransom of your king."

The pale head was then decked with a paper crown, and by order of Margaret of Anjou, and amid the ruthless laughter of her courtiers, placed over the inside of Micklegate Bar, with the blind heedless face turned towards the city. The Earl of Salisbury and other noblemen were sent to Pomfret and beheaded, and their heads also placed over the gates of York. About three thousand Yorkists fell in this bloody and cruel battle.

But nearly all that York has seen or done historically, happened in the Minster, and the crow, on the highest tower, now sits, as it were, in inquest over the coronation place of many happy and unhappy kings. A church has stood where the fair Minster

now rises, ever since the Easter of 627, when Paulinus baptised the newly converted Edwin, King of Northumberland, in a little wooden oratory hastily built for the occasion; the woodwork was soon replaced by stone. The Minster was partly destroyed by fire, once in 1137, then in 1829, and, lastly, in 1840 by the carelessness of plumbers. The fire of 1829 was the work of a mad sailor, named Martin, who believed Heaven had sent visions to tell him to burn the Minster, where the prayers and sermons vexed him as being mere forms, and not prayers of the heart. This fanatic lodged with a York shoemaker, whose house he left some days before the fire, saying he was going to reside at Leeds. The fire was on Monday morning; on the Saturday previous Martin suddenly returned to his old lodgings, to his landlord's surprise. Martin, however, told the shoemaker that, having twenty of his books to sell in Tadcaster, he had settled to come on to York. He left on Monday early, and did not return. He took with him from the old shoemaker's a pair of pincers, afterwards found on a stool near the last window of the north transept, from which a knotted rope was hanging.

About a week after the fire Martin was taken at Hexham, in Northumberland. He told everything with fanatical exultation and triumph. At evening service he had "laid down beside the Bishop"—that is, hidden himself behind the tomb of Archbishop Greenfield. Having heard the man come down from the belfry after ringing the bell for evening service, he soon went up there, struck a light with a flint and razor, then cut about a hundred feet of rope, and, being a sailor, soon constructed a scaling ladder, and went up, hand over hand, over the gates into the choir, where there was most woodwork for his purpose. He had taken care to bring a wax candle, tinder, and some brimstone matches. When he got down into the choir the madman fell on his knees and thanked God, but felt a voice say he would be caught, do what he would. The fringe and tassels from the pulpit and bishop's throne he carried off to prove the fire was his work, and also to adorn a hairy jacket he had at Lincoln. When he had torn up the prayer books and music books in heaps ready to light, "Glory to God," he told the York magistrates, "I never felt so happy, but I had a hard night's work of it, particularly with a hungered belly." He regretted he could not save the big Bible, but

he could not get it over the choir gates. What the Lord had given him for his hire he tied up in his handkerchief; and while he was so doing he kept shouting, "Glory to God" so often and so loud that he only wondered it was not heard outside. The mad sailor, who was confined as a lunatic, died in 1858. It is a curious fact that up to the time of his death, although expressly forbidden to draw the Minster or to write about it, he was always (with a madman's craft) drawing portions of it from memory under pretence of making drawings of Kenilworth and other ruins. To the last he believed that in a dream he had seen a cloud reaching from the Minster to the shoemaker's shop where he lodged, and that he had seen an angel shoot an arrow through the Minster door. The great organ burst with a tremendous noise during this lamentable fire. All the choir carving was destroyed, the tombs of Archbishops Sterne and Sharp were injured. The rood loft was burnt, with all the oak tabernacle work, and the celebrated screen between the choir and Lady Chapel had to be rebuilt. A curious old altar chair and the great brass eagle were saved in spite of the torrents of molten lead and the falling rafters.

One of the greatest curiosities in the Minster is the horn of Ulphus, which is of ivory mounted in brass. It is preserved in a chapel on the south side of the choir, which is used as a vestry, museum, and register room. This Ulphus, the son of Toraldus, was a Danish chieftain, who ruled the west part of Deira. A difference arising between his eldest and youngest sons about the succession after his death, he adopted a plan to make their shares equal. He rode to York with his largest drinking horn, and, filling it with wine, went on his knees before the altar, and bestowed upon God and the blessed Saint Peter all his lands, tenements, and personal wealth. There is property to the east of York which still bears his name. This horn was stolen in the reign of Elizabeth, but restored to the church by one of the Fairfaxes, shorn of its precious settings. It was remounted by the Dean and Chapter in 1675 (Charles the Second). There is in this chapel also a curious pastoral staff of silver given by Queen Catherine to her confessor when he was nominated Catholic Archbishop of York by James the Second. It is said that when marching insolently in procession to the Minster, the Earl of Darnley con-

fronted him, and wresting the new sceptre
from the Pretender's hand gave it to the
Dean and Chapter.

DAME MARTHA'S WELL.

DAME MARTHA bode in Sonderland,
A good and gentle dame;
When the winter was long and the rich man hard,
To her the poor folk came.

The hungry ate out of her hand,
The sickly took her bed,
And to the sinful wrongdoer
Sweet words of peace she said.

She was not rich in gold nor gear,
But all might share her best;
Silver nor gold she could not give,
But the crust she gave was blest

There came fierce foemen from afar,
Over the salt sea tide:
With fire and sword they laid full low
The hamlets far and wide.

From east to west in Sonderland
A fire ran bloody red:
Dame Martha's house was burnt full low,
And its gentle lady fled.

She fled unto a lonely tower,
To the sad kirkyard nigh,
Only the owl from his dark lair
Looked down with round bright eye.

Hungry and thirsty she abode
Unseen, apart from men;
Not a drop of all that she had given
Was given to her again.

But when the dark and bloody band
Again forsook that shore,
Dame Martha found her ruined house,
And built it up once more.

The hungry ate out of her hand,
The sickly took her bed,
And to the sinful wrongdoer
Sweet words of peace she said.

For many a day unto her door
They came from far and wide;
But many a human wanderer wept
The day Dame Martha died.

The kirk bell sounded sad and low,
Man, child, and woman, wept;
Wearily to the sad kirkyard
They bare her as she slept.

And when they passed the lonely tower
Where she in need had fled,
The bearers sat the black bier down,
And prayed, and blessed the dead.

And as they prayed with tearful eyes,
There sprang beneath the bier,
Out of the ground, a little well
Of water, crystal clear.

And still in rocky Sonderland
The village gossips tell,
The sick may drink and straight be healed
Out of Dame Martha's well.

God's blessing on the gentle soul,
Not rich in gold and gear,
That in the midst of evil days
Gleams up like water clear.

Like crystal clear, the gentle soul
Doth from the cold ground burst.
God bless the little wayside well
Refreshing all that thirst!

A DEADLY MIST.

SUNDAY morning by the sea. The early church bells going. A close sea-mist hanging heavily over the sands, and a baffled sun trying to make light of it, and failing. My window wide open, though sere October is growing old, and one long melancholy ripple of smooth sea wailing slowly along the shore. I have had a good breakfast, a fine romp with my children, and my wife is dressing for church. Everything with me is very calm and very happy; but only an hour ago I was in mortal peril of my life, and, instead of being in this pleasant room, with the voices of my little children outside breaking on my ear, and with the wash of the wave on the beach below my window setting a bass to their sweet treble, I might have been at this moment floating white and stiff on the still sea, with the thick mist hanging around me, and this world's loves and cares over with me for ever.

It was such a simple affair, such an easy way in which to meet one's death, that it is only the thought of what might have been, that gives warmth and colour to the contrast with what is: and I am filled with that feeling—which all men must have felt when they have learned how to feel—of respite, and escape, and of a longer trial allowed, another chance permitted. I am sure no one who has ever been consciously and calmly face to face with death will fail to understand what I mean.

One hour ago, only an hour, I went out, as usual, to bathe. The sands run up to my very windows, and the high tides sometimes touch the little wall that stands in front, so that I can often walk from my own hall-door into the water at a few yards' distance. But this morning the tide was dead out, and a heavy sea-fog was lying all over the sands, so that I could not see where the water and the land joined. I had not gone twenty yards until, looking back, I saw my house looming through the fog, quite altered in appearance, and, though much larger, still much more distant than usual. In a few more steps I lost it altogether. I soon came to the water's edge, took off my overall, and laid it on a flat stone: the only stone I could see, for there are no rocks.

The sea was dead calm, and I had to wade a long way out before I got deep enough for a plunge, after which I began to swim. The water was not too cold, there was not even a languid heave on its surface, and I struck out, enjoying the free motion, until I began to feel tired. I am a bad swimmer, and had never knowingly gone out of my depth. Dropping my feet I found myself up to the neck, and I then suddenly perceived that I was closely encircled by a dense mist, and was utterly at a loss to know which way the shore lay. The tide, I knew, was rising fast. I could not trust myself to swim, lest I should be swimming out to sea, instead of towards the land. I made a step or two in one direction, then in another, but always seemed to be getting deeper. Then, like a sudden blow, came upon me the full sense of my situation. Here I was, opposite my own door, where my wife and little children were waiting for me, within perhaps two hundred yards of dry land, dangerously deep in the water, and helplessly unable to find my way out.

The peril was imminent. I must have been, I now think, on the top of a low bank of sand, and, though shallow water and safety must have been within twenty yards of me, I could not, to save my life, tell which way to turn. It flashed on me that I should be drowned: drowned quietly and surely, within gunshot of my home; and that the flowing tide, there being no current and no wind, would float my dead body up, and leave it on the sands before my door. The danger was terrible: yet there was no hurry. The tide was rising fast, but I could not be drowned for at least ten minutes, and I had that time before me to do what I could with. It would never do to die like this, without an effort to save my life, but it was utterly impossible to say in what direction that effort should be made. The fog seemed to settle down closer and closer around me, and the water was rising steadily, but very slowly, the surface of the sea being like oil.

Something had to be done, and quickly. I stood quite still, and looked to see if there were any ripple of current against my neck that would show the inflow of the tide. There was none. I held up my wet arm to feel for a wind. There was not a breath. I strained my ears to hear any noise—the barking of a dog, voices on the land, the crowing of cocks, anything that would answer the, to me, tremendous question, Where is the shore?

Not a sound. The stillness was awful and horrible. To shout for help was the last resort; but I would not spend my strength in that, until I had tried everything else; and I knew, besides, that being a Sunday morning, and the sands deserted, there would be neither boat nor boatman on the shore. I remembered, too, that voices in a fog almost always seem to change their direction, and that they mislead those who come in search. Steadily and without noise the tide rose up, until the water reached my chin. I was perfectly collected, and endeavoured to recal all I had read of similar emergencies, tried back in my memory to find, if I could, some chance for life that some one else in deadly peril had risked and won. Holding my breath, and laying my ear close to the water, I strained every nerve of hearing in vain; but where the one sense on which I was depending failed me, another came to my rescue. Between the dense mist and the water, there seemed to be about an inch of interval, and through this chink, as it were, I saw the dusky base of a stone beacon which I knew stood out in the sea, nearly opposite my house. Here was a chance, and with an instant thrill of joy at having gained at last some idea of the direction in which an effort for life might be made, I struck out and swam to the beacon, where I laid hold of an iron bar which served to stay it to the rock below.

When the momentary exultation was over, I found I was not much better off than before. I had the beacon to hold to, and could even climb to the top, which was still a foot above the surface of the sea; but I knew it would be covered deep at half tide. Still here was more time gained; and the fear of death, or I should rather say, the settled assurance without fear, passed from me. Climbing to the top of the beacon, I tried if I could look out over the mist, but it was thicker than ever. Now came a curious illustration of the extraordinary closeness together of what we are accustomed to consider as our most opposed mental and moral emotions. I had just been in deadly peril of my life, and what I had gained was, perhaps, but a short respite. The danger was less imminent, still it was not past. I had been as near my death as ever I shall be until the end does come; yet I was so suddenly struck with the absurdity of my appearance—a naked man perched like a crane on a stone beacon in a white fog—that I burst into a roar of laughter.

Like an arrow through the mist came the quick bark of a terrier, followed by a cry of "Papa!" It was my little daughter's voice. She and Snap had gone down to the beach to look for me, had found my overall, and were quietly waiting beside it. The sound of her voice was like that of an angel calling through the dark. With a glad heart I dropped off the beacon, and, after swimming a few strokes, found my feet on firm land once again.

A very commonplace incident; but it has given me something to think about this Sunday morning; and I am rather afraid that I may be but an inattentive auditor of our good parson's sermon on the perils of dissent, which I am to hear in the church by-and-bye.

LECTURES FOR LADIES.

WE don't concern ourselves with the high philosophical question, whether women have or have not a right to be field-marshal and members of parliament, or to receive delicate attentions from the Man in the Moon at election time. It is not yet a heresy to think that they have their own particular part, and that a noble one, assigned to them in the great drama of life, and that although they may roar gently as a sucking dove, they will hardly find it worth while to play lion too. Quite apart from the contest for a new settlement of woman's rights, is the ground taken by those who have of late been acting on the general opinion that ignorance is not one of the gifts and graces of life, and that women, being as quick witted as men, were not born to be dunces.

The character of boys' schools has been raised by open examinations for certificates or degrees from the universities, and by the establishment in other ways of a standard of good education, which must be attained in every school that hopes to stand well with the public. But there never has been any test of the efficiency of girls' schools. The master of a boys' school usually has gone through a course of training which has enabled him to show distinct credentials, in evidence that he has himself learnt what he undertakes to teach. The most accomplished lady who should undertake to teach girls has been, in this respect, pretty much on a level with the veriest little goose, who shows her ignorance in nothing so much as in the belief that she is qualified to keep a school. The highly-educated woman could produce no evidence of thorough training, and, indeed, could have obtained such training only by quiet persistence in almost unaided exertion: while the higher education of men is assisted lavishly by money and endowments, by the energies of picked instructors, by social influence, the prompting of ambition, and the whole strength of a public

opinion which at one time was even half disposed to find bliss in the ignorance of women. Dr. Parr said in his Discourse on Education, little more than eighty years ago, that "as to the acquisitions of reading and writing, they are eminently serviceable to boys; but in regard to females I do not conceive them to be of equal use, unless they be accompanied by other attainments of a more domestic nature." And although the founder of Christ's Hospital designed that institution for both boys and girls, the strength of the old prejudice has resulted in the establishment of first-class educational training for more than a thousand boys, and provision for about two dozen girls of the instruction suitable for a maid-servant. The time is gone by, that bred men to speak and act in this fashion, and the natural demands of society have produced in many quarters sensible improvement of the character of girls' schools. Many a girl who can sketch, and sing, and not only read, but speak easily and well, one or two modern languages, is better educated than her brother, who has murdered Latin verse at Eton: at Eton as it used to be; for tradition there also has yielded of late to the vigorous life of the time, and modern languages have taken their place as an essential part of the training.

But in the best girls' schools, main reliance has usually to be placed on "masters." To men who have given public evidence of their knowledge of a subject, or who have passed honourably through their university career, schoolmistresses entrust the main part of the higher education of girls. About sixteen years ago, ladies' colleges were established, which still flourish in Harley-street and Bedford-square, London. Their aim was to do for girls what is done for boys when they have gone through their school course. In these institutions, ladies are active in giving subordinate or additional instruction, but they take no part in the main business of teaching, if we may judge from the last list, now before us, of "Subjects and Teachers," at Queen's College, Harley-street, in which every teacher is a Mr., and there is not one Mrs. or Miss. Given a man and a woman equally well acquainted with some subject, the man is likely to be found, for pupils of either sex, the more efficient teacher. The more retiring character and the more sensitive nature, while they quicken home delight, unfit, to some extent, for the work of public teaching. The man with bolder front and blunter sensibilities can bear the fret and fatigue of teaching, with less strain upon his patience, and can get from his work all the intellectual enjoyment it brings, while he goes through it patiently, calmly. Wind and rain are not the only sort of elements with which his hardier nature has made him more fit than a woman to contend. Women lay the foundations of all teaching, in girl and boy. They teach men daily by their influence; in the highest sense, no doubt, they are the best teachers in the world. But they are, to some degree, through qualities allied to all that is

best in their character, less fit than men for professional school teaching or public speaking, otherwise than by the pen.

One object of the founders of the Ladies' Colleges in Harley-street and Bedford-square was to supply the want of some standard of knowledge to which ladies, by obtaining their certificates, could show they had attained. A like help has been since extended to others by the Working Women's College in Queen-square. And still ladies who wish to prove that they are qualified teachers, often finish their education in France, for the sake of the certificate of fitness to teach obtainable under the French system.

But this object has now been attained for Englishwomen more effectually, by the liberal action of the Universities of Cambridge and London. A committee interested in advancement of education among girls, obtained leave from the Cambridge Syndicate to place, at a private examination, before pupils from various girls' schools, the papers given to the candidates sent up from boys' schools to the Cambridge local examinations of the year eighteen 'sixty-three. At six weeks' notice, ninety-one girls were collected as competitors in this private examination; fifty-seven of them failed, and of those who failed ninety per cent were rejected for arithmetic alone. In the year 'sixty-five, local examinations for girls were officially recognised as part of the Cambridge system. The teachers of the girls had learnt the sharp lesson taught by their first failure, and, at the next trial, of the girls who were rejected, only three failed in arithmetic. One could not desire better proof of the efficacy of a system of strict and impartial test, applied from without, in raising the standard of preliminary education. No doubt the finest and best minds are not necessarily those which come out best from the rough test of a competitive examination. To some senior students, the work for examination, and to some teachers the training for examination, must be absolutely a clog on the best use of their minds. But the wholesome effect upon the great average mass of the teachers and taught, is shown too clearly to be doubtful; while the mind apt for original and independent work can bear easily a short period of constraint, and may be only the more apt afterwards for its appointed uses. The Cambridge local examinations have, since 'sixty-five, been applied every year as tests of the school training of both girls and boys. The girls have slipped back in their arithmetic, and the last report says that, in this subject, "more efficient teaching is urgently required." The boys beat the girls in algebra, but in one year a girl greatly distinguished herself in applied mathematics. In French, boys and girls are about equal; but the girls know the grammar best; the boys trusting too much to analogies drawn from their imperfect knowledge of Latin. In German, the girls always do best, and they write better answers to history questions, "more straightforward and to the

point," and with "fewer attempts at fine writing." They beat the boys also in their studies of Shakespeare; surpass them, says one examiner, "in analysis of character and choice of language." In languages, also, they translate generally with greater spirit, and show a livelier interest in the subject matter; "express themselves more idiomatically, write and spell better, and are far less frequently guilty of putting down manifest absurdities."

This vivacity of mind rightly employed, becomes, no doubt, rather alarming to the stolid young man who was a booby at school, and counts for a booby in the world among his male acquaintances, but whose consolation is that he may hope not to be known for a booby in his home. Let him take heart. On this side Millennium, it will never be impossible for that young man to find a wife more stupid than himself; or he may even find a Titania content to take him, Bottom, for better for worse, and worship him as long as he will love her. The true woman is only more a woman for the quickening of her whole nature that culture brings with it. Instead of confounding the difference of mind between women and men, true education gives intensity to the real characters of each, points all the more strongly their differences, quickens their natural action and reaction on each other, doubles at once the delight and usefulness of their companionship. The woman so prepared is all the mother to her children, keen to appreciate their efforts, prompt and wise in sympathy, and by the subtle powers of her love and knowledge arms their souls for conquest in the strife to come. Starvation or insufficiency of diet acts on the mind as on the body. It may die into lunacy by a too complete want of substantial food for thought, or, ill-fed, may fall away into mere sickly feebleness. The shape and fashion of the plough does not so much concern the farmer, as the fact that there should be ploughing and sowing if the earth is to yield food for man. The best tilled ground must have its seasons of fallow, and the best trained mind needs times of holiday; but steady culture of some kind is essential, if the mind of man or woman is not to become a wilderness of weed and thistle. Women, with active intelligence that is, if anything, even more restless than the wit of men, must suffer in their minds if they are debarred from intellectual employments. No doubt most women are more apt than men for some studies and less apt for others. But experience has now shown clearly that in average ability and in capacity for steady work, there is no natural difference between boys and girls, and that if there be any between men and women, it is simply due to the fact that men hitherto have received better training in their youth. The University of Cambridge has added to its local examinations an "Examination for Women" who are beyond the age of eighteen years and six months. According to this plan, established in the present year, the obtaining of a certificate depends upon know-

ledge of arithmetic, of the English language, literature and history (with religious knowledge, if not specially objected to), and of two languages, or else two sciences, or else mathematics, or else political economy and logic.

In the present year, also, the University of London has held the first of the examinations authorised by a supplemental charter obtained two years ago—in August 'sixty-seven—to enable it to hold special examinations of women who wish for certificates of proficiency. The candidates for these certificates must be above the age of seventeen. Having succeeded in this first examination, they may proceed in the following year to an examination for certificates of higher value. The first test or "general examination," corresponds in severity to that of the matriculation examination for young men. A proposal to lower the standard a little, in consideration of the weaker character of the preliminary teaching in girls' schools, was wisely resisted. Without any special mercy to their sex (which would only have been special slight to their endeavours) the ladies who came up for examination were tested in Latin, including Roman history and geography; and in two other languages, which might be Greek, French, German, or Italian; in the English language, history and geography, in mathematics, in natural philosophy, and in chemistry or botany. The successful candidates were to be arranged in an honours division, and in a first and second division without honours. Nine came up, of whom six passed; and they were all six in the honours division. Of course, the few who were first to take advantage of this opportunity were from the number of those most alive to its value, and this fact, as well as the small number offered for comparison with the large number of young men who come up to matriculate, make it unfair to lay any stress on the fact that the greater per-centage of success was on the side of female candidates. Still there was the success; and there is reason to expect that the beginning has been made of a system of successive examinations by which highly-educated women, who desire to obtain confidence as teachers, or for other reasons find it valuable to have the degree of their attainments tested, will be enabled to show university certificates of value corresponding to the recognised degrees earned by young men. The last act of this kind is the establishment of a college near Cambridge for girl students, which is now just opened. At present it occupies a house at Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, and it is "designed to hold, in relation to girls' schools, a position analogous to that occupied by the universities towards the public schools for boys." The desire of its council is to connect this with the other Cambridge colleges, by obtaining from the University of Cambridge permission for its girl students to compete in the examination for degrees.

Obviously there is not the smallest necessary connexion between all this recent movement for improving the education of women and

questions of political rights. A few other social rights are, at the same time, winning wider recognition—a woman's right to her own earnings, for example; but her social right to opportunities of healthy cultivation of the mind may now surely be taken as past question.

How wholesomely the recent movement has grown out of the daily life of women in our day, and the steady, quiet endeavour of women themselves to escape from the stagnation of thought to which many of them had long been doomed, is shown by the rapid rise of a new system of lectures to ladies. In town after town, during the last two years, wherever there is a university or staff of college teachers, these lectures have been springing up, and the want they meet is so real that they will become one of the established customs of the country. The honour of their first establishment is due, we believe, to Edinburgh: though the suggestion is said to have been first made in the north of England. Six ladies of Edinburgh, about two years ago, succeeded in establishing the Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association, founded, supported, and managed, by ladies only. They looked to professors of the University of Edinburgh for the fulfilment of their object. Ladies who had passed through the stages of school training, and needed for the stern uses of life higher education; or who sought the healthy occupation of some form of culture of the mind, while they fulfilled the home duties for which quickened intelligence would only make them the more apt, or took their places in society; might attend many stray lectures on popular science, or on literary subjects likely to amuse. But something more was asked on their behalf, and this was, that professors and teachers who are entrusted by our universities and colleges with particular parts of the higher education of men should also do something to meet the earnest wish of women who desired like help. Ladies, entirely by action of their own, formed themselves into classes, and asked to be taught as men are taught when they seek thoroughness of knowledge: not in lectures planned to entertain them, but in lectures that would show them how to work. The beginning was made in the session 'sixty-seven-eight, at Edinburgh, by the professor of English literature in the university. Two hundred and sixty-five ladies attended his course. Many of these came only to give support to the new movement, but at least ninety-four came to do steady work. In the following year, the number of courses was advanced from one to three; and courses of lectures were given in English literature, experimental physics, and logic with mental philosophy, each by the professor of its subject in the university. The number of ladies who attended was, for the English literature class, one hundred and thirty; for the physics, one hundred and forty; for the logic, seventy. Nearly simultaneous with this action at Edinburgh was the establishment of a "North of England Council for promoting the Higher

Education of Women." It has procured courses of lectures, chiefly from Cambridge professors, at Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, and other towns. In the West of England the example has been followed in several towns. In Glasgow the example of Edinburgh was at once followed. The professor of natural history first gave a short course of geology to a class of seventy ladies, and this was followed last session by two courses, one on English literature, and the other on physical geography, to ladies' classes, numbering respectively three hundred and thirty-six and a hundred and forty.

At the beginning of this year, the example of the Edinburgh Ladies' Educational Association led to the formation of a London Ladies' Educational Association, with like objects, which looked for co-operation to the professors of University College, London. With wise promptitude it was resolved to be doing at once, and risk the chance of a poor start rather than spend a whole year in preparation. At very short notice, and with not much public announcement, two courses of lectures to ladies were begun at the Beethoven Rooms, in Harley-street: one by the professor of physics, and one by the professor of English literature at University College. Fifty-seven ladies entered to the class of physics, and a hundred and two to the class of literature. They attended steadily to the end of courses each of two dozen lectures; a considerable proportion of them wrote essays and exercises, and worked problems out. The work done, was as good as that done in an ordinary college class, and the success, as proved by the serious working attention given to both courses, emboldened the ladies' committee to attempt for their next session—beginning on the ninth of November this year—a greater extension of the system of lectures to ladies than has hitherto been ventured on elsewhere. Instead of two or three courses, six courses are now to be given; and the number of lectures in a course is raised, without increase of fee, from two dozen to three dozen: the subjects being, physics and English literature again (different sections of these subjects being taken), with the addition of French literature, Latin, geometry, and chemistry: each course being given by the professor of its subject in University College, London. Moreover, the scientific courses are now to be given (for more full use of the appliances necessary to such teaching), in the lecture rooms appropriated to them within the college walls: the ladies having not only an hour to themselves, but also separate entrances provided for them. Of course it remains to be seen whether so quick an advance towards a full scheme of aid to the higher education of Englishwomen, will be met in London by a sufficiently general desire for such education. The ladies who attend these classes, which admit none under seventeen, are chiefly of ages varying between seventeen and four-and-thirty. There are also older ladies who come in the faith that a right human desire for

knowledge ends only with life—never, if death be not the end of life—or who come that they may take an active helpful interest in the studies of their daughters. The movement has originated chiefly among ladies whose associations in life are with the more intellectual half of the upper middle class, and from such it has had its chief support; but high fees and fashionable accessories have been studiously avoided; and wherever these lectures have been established, there is absolute exclusion of all petty sense of clique and caste. The striving governess sits by the fashionable lady; as in the college class room the poor student who will hereafter battle hard for bread, sits on equal terms by the inheritor of thousands. Our English ladies—honour to them for it!—have, in fact, without effort, brought into the lecture rooms of their establishing, with other requisites, that fine catholic spirit which should be inseparable from a place of study.

THE FISHERS OF LOCH BOISDALE.

THE Tern's* first anchorage in the Long Island was at Loch Boisdale, and it was there that the dreary landscape of the Uist began to exercise its deep fascination over the Wanderer's mind. We lay at the usual place, close to the pier and inn, in the full enjoyment of the ancient and fish-like smell wafted to us from the curing places ashore. The herring-fishers had nearly all departed, save one or two native crews who were still labouring leisurely; but they had left their débris everywhere—skeletons of huts, piles of peat, fish-bones, scraps of rotten nets, even broken pots and dishes. One or two huts, some entirely of wood, stood empty, awaiting the return of their owners in the following spring. The whole place was deserted, its harvest time was over. When we rowed ashore in the punt, the population, consisting of two old men and some dirty little boys, received us in grim amazement and silence, until the advent of the innkeeper, who, repressing all outward symptoms of wonder, bade us a shy welcome and showed us the way to his establishment. The obvious impression was that we were insane; the tiny craft we had come over in, our wild and haggard appearance, and, above all, the fact that we had actually come to Loch Boisdale for pleasure (a fact unprecedented in the mind of the oldest inhabitant) all contributed to show our quality. The landlord was free and inquisitive, humouring us cunningly as the keepers do mad people, receiving all our statements calmly without contradic-

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. ii., p. 197.

tion, answering all our questions in the easy manner found useful in dealing with idiots and infants, and never thinking it worth while to correct us when we were wrong. As he sat chatting with us over a glass of whisky in a mildewy room of the inn, the inhabitants dropped in one by one; first the two old men, then a little boy, then a tipsy fisherman, and so on till the room was full of spectators, all with their mouths wide open, and all without any sign of ordering or drinking anything, staring at the strangers. This volley of eyes became at last so unbearable, that it was thought advisable to direct it elsewhere by ordering "glasses round;" a movement which, however grateful to the feelings, was received without enthusiasm, only the mouths and eyes opened still wider in amaze. The advent of the whisky, however, acted like a charm, and the company burst into a torrent of Gaelic, in which the words "Got taven" and "Sassenach" were easily distinguishable at intervals.

The result of a long conversation with the populace, which in number and appearance bore about the same relation to a respectable community that a stage "mob" in Julius Cæsar would bear to the real article, was not particularly edifying. The populace was cynical on the merits of Loch Boisdale; its principal beauties, in their opinion, being ague, starvation, and weariness. For any person to remain there, ever so short a time, who could by any possibility get out of it, was a thing not to be credited by common-sense. The innkeeper, however, tried to convey to us his comprehension that we had come there, not for pleasure, but "on a discovering manner," by which mystical Celticism he meant to say that we were visitors come to make inquiries, possibly with a view to commerce or statistics. He shook his head over both country and people, and seemed to think our inquiry was a waste of time.

For three days after that, it rained as it can rain only in the Long Island; and when at last, tired out of patience, we rushed ashore, our friend the innkeeper received us with a deprecating smile. With keen sarcasm, we demanded if it were always "that sort of weather" in Loch Boisdale, but he replied quite calmly, "Aye, much aboot." But when we sat down over usquebaugh, and the rain still plashing darkly without,

with its dull twofold sound,
The clash hard by, and the murmur all round!

showed that the weather was little likely to abate that day, the landlord seemed to think his credit at stake, and that even Loch Boisdale was appearing at a disadvantage. To console him, we told him that story of the innkeeper at Arrochar, which poor Hugh Macdonald used to retail with such unction over the toddy. An English traveller stayed for some days at Arrochar, and there had been nothing but rain from morn to night. The landlord tried to keep up his guest's spirits by repeated prophecies that the weather was "about to break up;" but at last, on the fifth day, the stranger could endure it no longer. "I say, landlord; have you ever—now on your honour—have you ever, any other sort of weather in this confounded place?" The landlord replied, humbly yet bitterly: "Speak nae mair, sir, speak nae mair—I'm just perfectly ashamed of the way in which our weather's behaving!" But the Loch Boisdale landlord seemed to think the tale too serious for laughter.

As we have noted above, the herring harvest was over. Twice in the year there is good fishing; in the spring and in the autumn; but the autumn fishing is left quite in the hands of a few native boats. The moment the spring fishing ends, Loch Boisdale subsides into torpor. All is desolate and still; only the fishy smell remains, to remind the yawning native of the glory that is departed.

A busy sight indeed is Loch Boisdale in the herring season. Smacks, open boats, skiffs, wherries, make the narrow waters shady; not a creek, however small, but holds some boat in shelter. A fleet, indeed! The Lochleven boat from the east coast, with its three masts and three huge lug-sails; the Newhaven boat with its two lug-sails; the Isle of Man "jigger;" the beautiful Guernsey runner, handsome as a racing yacht and powerful as a revenue-cutter; besides all the numberless fry of less noticeable vessels, from the fat west-country smack with its comfortable fittings down to the miserable Arran wherry.* Swarms of seagulls float everywhere, and the loch is

* The Arran wherry, now nearly extinct, is a wretched-looking thing without a bowsprit, but with two strong masts. Across the foremast is a small bulkhead, and there is a small locker for blankets and bread. In the open space between bulkhead and locker birch tops are thickly strewn for a bed, and for covering there is a huge woollen waterproof blanket ready to be stretched out on spars. Close to the mast lies a huge stone, and thereon a stove. The cable is of *heather rope*, the anchor wooden, and the stock a stone. Rude and ill-found as these boats are, they face weather before which any ordinary yachtsman would quail.

so oily with the fishy deposit that it requires a strong wind to ruffle its surface. Everywhere on the shore and hill sides, and on the numberless islands, rises the smoke of camps. Busy swarms surround the curing-houses and the inn, while the beach is strewn with fishermen stretched at length, and dreaming till night time. In the afternoon, the fleet slowly begins to disappear, melting away out into the ocean, not to reappear till long after the grey of the next dawn.

Did you ever go out for a night with the herring fishers? If you can stand cold and wet, you would enjoy the thing hugely, especially if you have a boating mind. Imagine yourself on board a west-country smack, running out of Boisdale harbour with the rest of the fleet. It is afternoon, and there is a nice fresh breeze from the south-west. You crouch in the stern by the side of the helmsman, and survey all around you with the interest of a novice. Six splendid fellows, in various picturesque attitudes, lounge about the great, broad, open hold, and another is down in the fore-castle boiling coffee. If you were not there, half of these would be taking their sleep down below. It seems a lazy business, so far; but wait! By sunset the smack has run fifteen miles up the coast, and is going seven or eight miles east of Ru Hamish lighthouse; many of the fleet still keep her company, steering thick as shadows in the summer twilight. How thick the gulls gather yonder! That dull plash ahead of the boat was the plunge of a solan goose. That the herrings are hereabout, and in no small numbers, you might be sure, even without that bright phosphorescent light which travels in patches in the water to leeward. Now is the time to see the lounging crew dart into sudden activity. The boat's head is brought up to the wind, and the sails are lowered in an instant.* One man grips the helm, another lugs out the back rope of the net, a third the "skunk," or body, a fourth is placed to see the buoys clear and heave them out, the rest attend forward, keeping a sharp look-out for other nets, ready, in case the boat should run too fast, to steady her by dropping the anchor a few fathoms into the sea. When all the nets are out, the boat is brought bow on to the net, the "swing" (as they call the rope attached to the net) secured to the smack's "bits," and all hands then lower the mast

as quickly as possible. The mast lowered, secured, and made all clear for hoisting at a moment's notice, and the candle lantern set up in the iron stand made for the purpose of holding it, the crew leave one look-out on deck, with instructions to call them up at a fixed hour, and turn in below for a nap in their clothes: unless it so happens that your brilliant conversation, seasoned with a few bottles of whisky, should tempt them to steal a few more hours from the summer night. Day breaks, and every man is on deck. All hands are busy at work, taking the net in over the bow, two supporting the body, the rest hauling the back rope, save one, who takes the net into the hold, and another who arranges it from side to side in the hold to keep the vessel even. Tweet! tweet! that thin cheeping sound, not unlike the razor-like call of the bat, is made by the dying herrings at the bottom of the boat. The sea to leeward, the smack's hold, the hands and arms of the men, are gleaming like silver. As many of the fish as possible are shaken loose during the process of hauling in, but the rest are left in the net until the smack gets to shore. Three or four hours pass away in this wet and tiresome work. At last, however, the nets are all drawn in, the mast is hoisted, the sail set, and while the cook (there being always one man having this branch of work in his department) plunges below to make breakfast, the boat makes for Loch Boisdale. Everywhere on the water, see the fishing-boats making for the same bourne, blessing their luck or cursing their misfortune, just as the fortune of the night may have been. All sail is set if possible, and it is a wild race to the market. Even when the anchorage is reached, the work is not quite finished; for the fish has to be measured out in "cran" baskets,* and delivered at the curing station. By the time that the crew have got their morning dram, have arranged the nets snugly in the stern, and have had some herrings for dinner, it is time to be off again to the harvest field. Half the crew turn in for sleep, while the other half hoist sail and conduct the vessel out to sea.

Huge, indeed, are the swarms that inhabit Boisdale, afloat or ashore, during this harvest; but, partly because each man has business on hand, and partly because there is plenty of sea room, there are few breaches of the peace. On Saturday night

* There is fashion everywhere. An east-country boat always shoots across the wind, of course carrying some sail, while a west-country boat shoots before the wind with bare poles.

* A cran holds rather more than a herring barrel, and the average value of a cran measure of herrings is about one pound sterling.

the public-house is crowded, and now and then the dull roar ceases for a moment as some obstreperous member is shut out summarily into the dark. Besides the regular fishermen and people employed at the curing stations, there are the herring gutters—women of all ages, many of whom follow singly the fortunes of the fishers from place to place. Their business is to gut and salt the fish, which they do with wonderful swiftness and skill. Hideous, indeed, looks a group of these women, defiled from head to foot with herring garbage, and laughing and talking volubly, while gulls innumerable float above them, and fill the air with their discordant screams. But look at them when their work is over, and they are changed indeed. Always cleanly, and generally smartly dressed, they parade the roads and wharf. Many of them are old and ill-favoured, but you will see among them many a blooming cheek and beautiful eye. Their occupation is a profitable one, especially if they be skilful; for they are paid according to the amount of work they do.

It is the custom of most of the east-country fishers to bring over their own women—one to every boat, sleeping among the men, and generally related to one or more of the crew. We have met many of these girls, some of them very pretty, and could vouch for their perfect purity. Besides their value as cooks, they can gut herrings and mend nets; but their chief recommendation in the eyes of the canny fishermen is that they are kith and kin, while the natives are strangers "no' to be trusted." The east-country fisherman, on his arrival, invariably encamps on shore, and the girl or woman "keeps the house" for the whole crew.

For, the east-country fisherman likes to be comfortable. He is at once the most daring and the most careful. He will face such dangers on the sea as would make most men die of fright, while at the same time he is as cautious as a woman in providing against cold and ague. How he manages to move in his clothes, is matter for marvel, for he is packed like a patient after the cold water process. Only try to clothe yourself in all the following articles of attire; pair of socks, pair of stockings over them half up the leg, to be covered by the long fishing boots; on the trunk, a thick flannel, covered with an oilskin vest; after that, a common jacket and vest; on the top of those, an oilskin coat; next, a mighty muffler to wind round the neck and

bury the chin and mouth; and last of all, the sou'-wester! This is the usual costume of an east-country fisherman, and he not only breathes and lives in it, but manages his boat better than any of his rivals on the sea. He drags himself along on land awkwardly enough; and on board, instead of rising to walk, he rolls, as it were, from one part of the boat to the other. He is altogether a more calculating dog than the west-country man, more eager for gain, colder and more reticent in all his dealings with human kind.

GREEN TEA.

A CASE REPORTED BY MARTIN HESSELIUS, THE GERMAN PHYSICIAN.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IX. THE THIRD STAGE.

"I SEE, Dr. Hesselius, that you don't lose one word of my statement. I need not ask you to listen specially to what I am now going to tell you. They talk of the optic nerves, and of spectral illusions, as if the organ of sight was the only point assailable by the influences that have fastened upon me—I know better. For two years in my direful case that limitation prevailed. But as food is taken in softly at the lips, and then brought under the teeth, as the tip of the little finger caught in a mill-crank will draw in the hand, and the arm, and the whole body, so the miserable mortal who has been once caught firmly by the end of the finest fibre of his nerve, is drawn in and in, by the enormous machinery of hell, until he is as I am. Yes, doctor, as I am, for while I talk to you, and implore relief, I feel that my prayer is for the impossible, and my pleading with the inexorable."

I endeavoured to calm his visibly increasing agitation, and told him that he must not despair.

While we talked the night had overtaken us. The filmy moonlight was wide over the scene which the window commanded, and I said:

"Perhaps you would prefer having candles. This light, you know, is odd. I should wish you, as much as possible, under your usual conditions while I make my diagnosis, shall I call it—otherwise I don't care."

"All lights are the same to me," he said: "except when I read or write, I care not if night were perpetual. I am going to tell you what happened about a year ago. The thing began to speak to me."

"Speak! How do you mean—speak as a man does, do you mean?"

"Yes; speak in words and consecutive sentences, with perfect coherence and articulation; but there is a peculiarity. It is not like the tone of a human voice. It is not by my ears it reaches me—it comes like a singing through my head.

"This faculty, the power of speaking to me, will be my undoing. It won't let me pray, it interrupts me with dreadful blasphemies. I dare not go on, I could not. Oh! doctor, can the skill, and thought, and prayers of man avail me nothing!"

"You must promise me, my dear sir, not to trouble yourself with unnecessarily exciting thoughts; confine yourself strictly to the narrative of *facts*; and recollect, above all, that even if the thing that infests you be as you seem to suppose, a reality with an actual independent life and will, yet it can have no power to hurt you, unless it be given from above: its access to your senses depends mainly upon your physical condition—this is, under God, your comfort and reliance: we are all alike environed. It is only that in your case, the 'paries,' the veil of the flesh, the screen, is a little out of repair, and sights and sounds are transmitted. We must enter on a new course, sir—be encouraged. I'll give to-night to the careful consideration of the whole case."

"You are very good, sir; you think it worth trying, you don't give me quite up; but, sir, you don't know, it is gaining such an influence over me: it orders me about, it is such a tyrant, and I'm growing so helpless. May God deliver me!"

"It orders you about—of course you mean by speech?"

"Yes, yes; it is always urging me to crimes, to injure others, or myself. You see, doctor, the situation is urgent, it is indeed. When I was in Shropshire, a few weeks ago" (Mr. Jennings was speaking rapidly and trembling now, holding my arm with one hand, and looking in my face), "I went out one day with a party of friends for a walk: my persecutor, I tell you, was with me at the time. I lagged behind the rest: the country near the Dee, you know, is beautiful. Our path happened to lie near a coal mine, and at the verge of the wood is a perpendicular shaft, they say, a hundred and fifty feet deep. My niece had remained behind with me—she knows, of course, nothing of the nature of my sufferings. She knew, however, that I had been ill, and was low, and she remained to

prevent my being quite alone. As we loitered slowly on together the brute that accompanied me was urging me to throw myself down the shaft. I tell you now—oh, sir, think of it!—the one consideration that saved me from that hideous death was the fear lest the shock of witnessing the occurrence should be too much for the poor girl. I asked her to go on and take her walk with her friends, saying that I could go no further. She made excuses, and the more I urged her the firmer she became. She looked doubtful and frightened. I suppose there was something in my looks or manner that alarmed her; but she would not go, and that literally saved me. You had no idea, sir, that a living man could be made so abject a slave of Satan," he said, with a ghastly groan and a shudder.

There was a pause here, and I said, "You were preserved nevertheless. It was the act of God. You are in his hands and in the power of no other being: be therefore confident for the future."

CHAPTER X. HOME.

I MADE him have candles lighted, and saw the room looking cheery and inhabited before I left him. I told him that he must regard his illness strictly as one dependent on physical, though *subtle* physical, causes. I told him that he had evidence of God's care and love in the deliverance which he had just described, and that I had perceived with pain that he seemed to regard its peculiar features as indicating that he had been delivered over to spiritual reprobation. Than such a conclusion nothing could be, I insisted, less warranted; and not only so, but more contrary to facts, as disclosed in his mysterious deliverance from that murderous influence during his Shropshire excursion. First, his niece had been retained by his side without his intending to keep her near him; and, secondly, there had been infused into his mind an irresistible repugnance to execute the dreadful suggestion in her presence.

As I reasoned this point with him, Mr. Jennings wept. He seemed comforted. One promise I exacted, which was that should the monkey at any time return, I should be sent for immediately; and, repeating my assurance that I would give neither time nor thought to any other subject until I had thoroughly investigated his case, and that to-morrow he should hear the result, I took my leave.

Before getting into the carriage I told

the servant that his master was far from well, and that he should make a point of frequently looking into his room.

My own arrangements I made with a view to being quite secure from interruption.

I merely called at my lodgings, and, with a travelling-desk and carpet-bag, set off in a hackney-carriage for an inn about two miles out of town, called The Horns, a very quiet and comfortable house, with good thick walls. And there I resolved, without the possibility of intrusion or distraction, to devote some hours of the night, in my comfortable sitting-room, to Mr. Jennings's case, and so much of the morning as it might require.

(There occurs here a careful note of Dr. Hesselius's opinion upon the case, and of the habits, dietary, and medicines which he prescribed. It is curious—some people would say mystical. But on the whole I doubt whether it would sufficiently interest a reader of the kind I am likely to meet with to warrant its being here reprinted. This whole letter was plainly written at the inn in which he had hid himself for the occasion. The next letter is dated from his town lodgings.)

I left town for the inn where I slept last night at half-past nine, and did not arrive at my room in town until one o'clock this afternoon. I found a letter in Mr. Jennings's hand upon my table. It had not come by post, and on inquiry, I learned that Mr. Jennings's servant had brought it, and on learning that I was not to return until to-day, and that no one could tell him my address, he seemed very uncomfortable, and said that his orders from his master were that he was not to return without an answer.

I opened the letter, and read :

"Dear Dr. Hesselius. It is here. You had not been an hour gone when it returned. It is speaking. It knows all that has happened. It knows everything—it knows you, and is frantic and atrocious. It reviles. I send you this. It knows every word I have written—I write. This I promised, and I therefore write, but I fear very confused, very incoherently. I am so interrupted, disturbed.

"Ever yours, sincerely yours,

"ROBERT LYNDER JENNINGS."

"When did this come?" I asked.

"About eleven last night; the man was here again, and has been here three times

to-day. The last time is about an hour since."

Thus answered, and with the notes I had made upon his case in my pocket, I was, in a few minutes, driving out to Richmond, to see Mr. Jennings.

I by no means, as you perceive, despaired of Mr. Jennings's case. He had himself remembered and applied, though quite in a mistaken way, the principle which I lay down in my *Metaphysical Medicine*, and which governs all such cases. I was about to apply it in earnest. I was profoundly interested, and very anxious to see and examine him while the "enemy" was actually present.

I drove up to the sombre house, and ran up the steps, and knocked. The door, in a little time, was opened by a tall woman in black silk. She looked ill, and as if she had been crying. She curtsied, and heard my question, but she did not answer. She turned her face away, extending her hand hurriedly towards two men who were coming down-stairs; and thus having, as it were, tacitly made me over to them, she passed through a side-door hastily and shut it.

The man who was nearest the hall, I at once accosted, but being now close to him, I was shocked to see that both his hands were covered with blood.

I drew back a little, and the man passing down-stairs merely said in a low tone, "Here's the servant, sir."

The servant had stopped on the stairs, confounded and dumb at seeing me. He was rubbing his hands in a handkerchief, and it was steeped in blood.

"Jones, what is it, what has happened?" I asked, while a sickening suspicion overpowered me.

The man asked me to come up to the lobby. I was beside him in a moment, and frowning and pallid, with contracted eyes, he told me the horror which I already half guessed.

His master had made away with himself.

I went up-stairs with him to the room—what I saw there I won't tell you. He had cut his throat with his razor. It was a frightful gash. The two men had laid him upon the bed and composed his limbs. It had happened, as the immense pool of blood on the floor declared, at some distance between the bed and the window. There was carpet round his bed, and a carpet under his dressing-table, but none on the rest of the floor; for the man said he did not like carpet on his bedroom. In this sombre,

and now terrible room, one of the great elms that darkened the house was slowly moving the shadow of one of its great boughs upon this dreadful floor.

I beckoned to the servant and we went down-stairs together. I turned, off the hall, into an old-fashioned panelled room, and there standing, I heard all the servant had to tell. It was not a great deal.

"I concluded, sir, from your words, and looks, sir, as you left last night, that you thought my master seriously ill. I thought it might be that you were afraid of a fit, or something. So I attended very close to your directions. He sat up late, till past three o'clock. He was not writing or reading. He was talking a great deal to himself, but that was nothing unusual. At about that hour I assisted him to undress, and left him in his slippers and dressing-gown. I went back softly in about half an hour. He was in his bed, quite undressed, and a pair of candles lighted on the table beside his bed. He was leaning on his elbow and looking out at the other side of the bed when I came in. I asked him if he wanted anything, and he said no.

"I don't know whether it was what you said to me, sir, or something a little unusual about him, but I was uneasy, uncommon uneasy, about him last night.

"In another half hour, or it might be a little more, I went up again. I did not hear him talking as before. I opened the door a little. The candles were both out, which was not usual. I had a bedroom candle, and I let the light in, a little bit, looking softly round. I saw him sitting in that chair beside the dressing-table with his clothes on again. He turned round and looked at me. I thought it strange he should get up and dress, and put out the candles to sit in the dark, that way. But I only asked him again if I could do anything for him. He said, no, rather sharp, I thought. I asked if I might light the candles, and he said, 'Do as you like, Jones.' So I lighted them, and I lingered a little about the room, and he said, 'Tell me truth, Jones, why did you come again—you did not hear any one cursing?' 'No, sir,' I said, wondering what he could mean.

"'No,' said he, after me, 'of course, no;' and I said to him, 'Wouldn't it be well, sir, you went to bed? It's just five o'clock;' and he said nothing but, 'Very likely: good-night, Jones.' So I went, sir, but in less than an hour I came again. The door was fast, and he heard me, and called as I thought from the bed to know what I

wanted, and he desired me not to disturb him again. I lay down and slept for a little. It must have been between six and seven when I went up again. The door was still fast, and he made no answer, so I did not like to disturb him, and thinking he was asleep, I left him till nine. It was his custom to ring when he wished me to come, and I had no particular hour for calling him. I tapped very gently, and getting no answer, I stayed away a good while, supposing he was getting some rest then. It was not till eleven o'clock I grew really uncomfortable about him—for at the latest he was never, that I could remember, later than half-past ten. I got no answer. I knocked and called, and still no answer. So not being able to force the door, I called Thomas from the stables, and together we forced it, and found him in the shocking way you saw."

Jones had no more to tell. Poor Mr. Jennings was very gentle, and very kind. All his people were fond of him. I could see that the servant was very much moved.

So, dejected and agitated, I passed from that terrible house, and its dark canopy of elms, and I hope I shall never see it more. While I write to you I feel like a man who has but half waked from a frightful and monotonous dream. My memory rejects the picture with incredulity and horror. Yet I know it is true. It is the story of the process of a poison, a poison which excites the reciprocal action of spirit and nerve, and paralyses the tissue that separates those cognate functions of the senses, the external and the interior. Thus we find strange bed-fellows, and the mortal and immortal prematurely make acquaintance.

CONCLUSION. A WORD FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER.

My dear Van L., you have suffered from an affection similar to that which I have just described. You twice complained of a return of it.

Who, under God, cured you? Your humble servant, Martin Hesselius. Let me rather adopt the more emphasised piety of a certain good old French surgeon of three hundred years ago: "I treated, and God cured you."

Come, my friend, you are not to be hippish. Let me tell you a fact.

I have met with, and treated, as my book shows, fifty-seven cases of this kind of vision, which I term indifferently "sublimated," "precocious," and "interior."

There is another class of affections which

are truly termed—though commonly confounded with those which I describe—spectral illusions. These latter I look upon as being no less simply curable than a cold in the head or a trifling dyspepsia.

It is those which rank in the first category that test our promptitude of thought. Fifty-seven such cases have I encountered, neither more nor less. And in how many of these have I failed? In no one single instance.

There is no one affliction of mortality more easily and certainly reducible, with a little patience, and a rational confidence in the physician. With these simple conditions, I look upon the cure as absolutely certain.

You are to remember that I had not even commenced to treat Mr. Jennings's case. I have not any doubt that I should have cured him perfectly in eighteen months, or possibly it might have extended to two years. Some cases are very rapidly curable, others extremely tedious. Every intelligent physician who will give thought and diligence to the task, will effect a cure.

You know my tract on *The Cardinal Functions of the Brain*. I there, by the evidence of innumerable facts, prove, as I think, the high probability of a circulation arterial and venous in its mechanism, through the nerves. Of this system, thus considered, the brain is the heart. The fluid, which is propagated hence through one class of nerves, returns in an altered state through another, and the nature of that fluid is spiritual, though not immaterial, any more than, as I before remarked, light or electricity are so.

By various abuses, among which the habitual use of such agents as green tea is one, this fluid may be affected as to its quality, but it is more frequently disturbed as to equilibrium. This fluid being that which we have in common with spirits, a congestion found upon the masses of brain or nerve, connected with the interior sense, forms a surface unduly exposed, on which disembodied spirits may operate: communication is thus more or less effectually established. Between this brain circulation and the heart circulation there is an intimate sympathy. The seat, or rather the instrument of exterior vision, is the eye. The seat of interior vision is the nervous

tissue and brain, immediately about and above the eyebrow. You remember how effectually I dissipated your pictures by the simple application of iced eau-de-cologne. Few cases, however, can be treated exactly alike with anything like rapid success. Cold acts powerfully as a repellant of the nervous fluid. Long enough continued it will even produce that permanent insensibility which we call numbness, and a little longer, muscular as well as sensational paralysis.

I have not, I repeat, the slightest doubt that I should have first dimmed and ultimately sealed that inner eye which Mr. Jennings had inadvertently opened. The same senses are opened in delirium tremens, and entirely shut up again when the overaction of the cerebral heart, and the prodigious nervous congestions that attend it, are terminated by a decided change in the state of the body. It is by acting steadily upon the body, by a simple process, that this result is produced—and inevitably produced—I have never yet failed.

Poor Mr. Jennings made away with himself. But that catastrophe was the result of a totally different malady, which, as it were, projected itself upon that disease which was established. His case was in the distinctive manner a complication, and the complaint under which he really succumbed, was hereditary suicidal mania. Poor Mr. Jennings I cannot call a patient of mine, for I had not even begun to treat his case, and he had not yet given me, I am convinced, his full and unreserved confidence. If the patient do not array himself on the side of the disease, his cure is certain.

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